

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Joint Application by SBC Communications Inc.,)	
Illinois Bell Telephone Company, Indiana Bell)	
Telephone Company Incorporated, The Ohio Bell)	
Telephone Company, Wisconsin Bell, Inc., and)	WC Docket No. 03-167
Southwestern Bell Communications Services,)	
Inc., for Authorization Under Section 271)	
Of the Communications Act to Provide)	
Provide In-Region, InterLATA Service in)	
Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin)	

**COMMENTS OF
RCN TELECOM SERVICES OF ILLINOIS, LLC**

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**COMMENTS OF
RCN TELECOM SERVICES OF ILLINOIS, LLC**

RCN Telecom Services of Illinois, LLC (“RCN”), through undersigned counsel, submits its comments concerning the Application by SBC Communications Inc., Illinois Bell Telephone Company, Indiana Bell Telephone Company Incorporated, The Ohio Bell Telephone Company, Wisconsin Bell, Inc., and Southwestern Bell Telephone Communications Services, Inc. (collectively, “SBC” or the “Applicants”), for authorization Under Section 271 of the Communications Act to Provide In-Region, InterLATA Service in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin (“Application”).

I. SUMMARY

RCN urges the Commission to deny the application because the Applicants are not providing non-discriminatory access to databases in violation of Checklist Item 2 (OSS). Specifically, SBC has continuously refused to provide RCN non-discriminatory access to the Living Unit (LIV) database in a format that would be usable by RCN to scrub customer address

data prior to address validation.¹ Consequently, RCN has experienced numerous address validation rejects due to “incorrect address”,² and has been required to expend substantial resources to reconcile, validate and manually resubmit address validation requests. In addition, the errors and resulting delays created by SBC’s refusal to provide access to the LIV database, have resulted in customer dissatisfaction, in-service delay, and ultimately failure to migrate customers to RCN’s network.

II. SBC FAILS TO COMPLY WITH CHECKLIST ITEM 2 WITH RESPECT TO THE LIV DATABASE.

A. Checklist Item 2 Requirements.

Checklist Item 2 under Section 271 requires SBC to provide “[n]ondiscriminatory access to network elements in accordance with the requirements of sections 251(c)(3) and 252(d)(2) of the Act.”³ Under checklist item 2, SBC must demonstrate that it provides nondiscriminatory access to the five OSS functions: (1) pre-ordering; (2) ordering; (3) provisioning; (4) maintenance and repair; and (5) billing.⁴ RCN’s comments focus on SBC’s provision of the pre-

¹ RCN notes that SBC’s failure to provide RCN access to the LIV database did not become an issue until after the date for submission of briefs in the Illinois Commerce Commission (“ICC”) proceeding to consider SBC’s Illinois 271 application. *Investigation Concerning Illinois Bell Telephone Company’s Compliance with Section 271 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*, Docket No. 01-0662. Specifically, in June 2002, SBC implemented edits to the LIV database that raised this issue. Since that time, RCN has experienced an increasing number of order rejects as a result of inconsistencies in address information, and SBC has not offered a reasonable resolution of the issue.

² Significantly, as discussed in more detail below, because the address in SBC’s LIV database does not always match the United State Postal Service address for the customer or the address provided by the customer, it is impossible for RCN to identify the address contained in the LIV database in order to provision customers’ orders on a streamlined basis.

³ 47 U.S.C. § 271(c)(2) (B) (ii).

⁴ *Application of Qwest Communications International, Inc. for Authorization Authorization To Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in the States of Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming*, CC Docket No. 02-314, Memorandum Opinion and Order, FCC 02-332, ¶ 34 (rel. Dec. 23, 2002) (“*Qwest Multi-State 271 Order*”); *Application by Bell Atlantic New York for Authorization Under Section 271 of the Communications Act to Provide In-Region, InterLATA Service in the State of New York*, 15 FCC Rcd 3953, 3989, ¶. 82 (1999) (“*Bel Atlantic New York 271 Order*”), *aff’d sub nom.*, *AT&T Corp. v. FCC*, 220 F.3d 607 (D.C. Cir. 2000). OSS includes the various systems, databases, and personnel used by ILECs to provide service to their customers. See *Application by SBC Communications Inc., Southwestern Bell Telephone Company*,

ordering function. The pre-ordering function includes gathering and verifying the information necessary to place a new service order,⁵ including address verification.⁶

As the Commission has recognized, “given that pre-ordering represents the first exposure that a prospective customer has to a competing carrier, inferior access to the incumbent’s OSS may render the competing carrier less efficient or responsive than the incumbent.”⁷ Therefore, the standard the FCC applies in evaluating a BOC’s OSS, including the pre-ordering function, is whether the BOC provides access to its OSS that allows competitors to perform pre-ordering functions in substantially the same time and manner as the BOCs retail operations.⁸ SBC cannot demonstrate that it has met that standard in this case.

and Southwestern Bell Communications Services, Inc., d/b/a Southwestern Bell Long Distance Pursuant to Section 271 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 To Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in Texas, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 15 FCC Rcd 18354, 18396-97, ¶ 92 (2000) (“*SWBT Texas 271 Order*”) (emphasis added).

⁵ *Bell Atlantic New York 271 Order*, 15 FCC Rcd at 4014, ¶ 129; *Application of BellSouth Corporation, et al., Pursuant to Section 271 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, to Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in South Carolina*, CC Docket No. 97-208, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 13 FCC Rcd 539, 589, ¶ 91 (1997) (“*BellSouth South Carolina 271 Order*”).

⁶ In prior orders, the Commission has identified the following five preordering functions: (1) customer service record (CSR) information; (2) address validation; (3) telephone number information; (4) due date information; and (5) services and feature information. *Application by BellSouth Corporation, et al. Pursuant to Section 271 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, to Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in Louisiana*, CC Docket No. 97-231, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 13 FCC Rcd 6245, 6274, ¶ 47 (1998) (“*First BellSouth Louisiana 271 Order*”).

⁷ *Qwest Multi-State 271 Order*, FCC 02-332, ¶ 38 (citing *Bell Atlantic New York 271 Order*, 15 FCC Rcd at 4014, ¶ 129; *Application of BellSouth Corporation, BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc., and BellSouth Long Distance, Inc. for Provision of In-Region, InterLATA Services In Louisiana*, CC Docket No. 98-121, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 13 FCC Rcd 20599, 20669 (1998) (“*Second BellSouth Louisiana 271 Order*”)).

⁸ *Qwest Multi-State 271 Order*, FCC 02-332, ¶ 38 (citing *Bell Atlantic New York 271 Order*, 15 FCC Rcd at 4014, ¶ 129; *BellSouth South Carolina 271 Order*, 13 FCC Rcd at 619; *Second BellSouth Louisiana 271 Order*, 13 FCC Rcd 20655; *Application of Ameritech Michigan Pursuant to Section 271 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, To Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in Michigan*, CC Docket No. 97-137, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 12 FCC Rcd 20543, 20618-20619 (1997) (“*Ameritech Michigan 271 Order*”)).

In the *Qwest Multi-State 271 Order*, the Commission concluded that Qwest provides nondiscriminatory access to OSS pre-ordering functions in accordance with Checklist Item 2.⁹ In reaching this conclusion, the FCC found that Qwest offers requesting carriers access to two electronic application-to-application interfaces that enable them to perform the same pre-ordering functions that Qwest provides for its retail operations. The Commission noted that competing carriers using these interfaces were able to gain access to pre-ordering information, including address validation.¹⁰ Of particular importance to this proceeding, the Commission also noted that “[c]ompetitors use this function to determine if a customer’s address matches the address in Qwest’s OSS, and this tool is used to create a list of validated addresses that can be used to generate other pre-ordering and ordering transactions.”¹¹ In stark contrast, SBC does not provide competitors any access to its LIV database in order to match addresses and create a list of validated addresses for pre-ordering purposes.

B. SBC’s Pre-Ordering Function Does Not Provide Nondiscriminatory Access to the LIV Database.

Prior to submitting a service order to SBC for unbundled network elements, RCN performs a number of preorder functions in an attempt to expedite the ordering and provisioning process and eliminate the possibility of errors or inconsistencies that will cause an order to fall out of SBC’s mechanized ordering process. In most cases, if a UNE service order does not include a customer address that matches exactly the address in SBC’s internal database, SBC’s ordering system will reject the order, delaying order processing and completion, and the availability of the customer’s service. Consequently, RCN routinely verifies the customer’s

⁹ *Qwest Multi-State 271 Order*, FCC 02-332, ¶ 39.

¹⁰ *Id.* at ¶ 40.

¹¹ *Id.* at ¶ 40, n.108.

address against SBC's database before submitting a service order to ensure that the correct address is included on the service order and verify the availability of facilities.

In order to perform address verification, RCN submits a query to SBC's internal database prior to submitting its order.¹² Assuming that all of the other order fields are properly completed, if the address matches exactly the information in SBC's database, the order will flow through SBC's mechanized ordering process without manual intervention and will be provisioned. If the address on the service order does not match the address in SBC's internal database, RCN receives an address reject and must expend time and resources reconciling the "differences" between the addresses and resubmitting the service order.

RCN's serving area includes numerous multi-dwelling unit ("MDU") properties, which requires an additional level of address validation beyond the basic street address. This additional validation step requires validation of the address to the LIV unit, contained in SBC's LIV database. The LIV unit, or living unit, is the designation for apartment, floor, garden and similar location identifiers. While these designations may be noted as APT, FL, or GARDEN on a service order, the designations are not standardized and must be matched up exactly to SBC's internal database for an order to flow through SBC's mechanized ordering system without manual intervention.

In order to streamline its ordering process and to reduce the possibility of errors from manual order entry, RCN utilizes the United States Postal Service ("USPS") addresses with its billing system. All of RCN's customers' addresses are preloaded into the billing system and further tied to the automated service order process. In this manner, when an RCN service

¹² SBC offers address data validation files that may be accessed via Connect direct, CD-ROM, Preorder Graphical User Interface and CLEC Online; however, access to the LIV database in CD-ROM format or flat file is currently not available.

representative places an order for an RCN customer, he can locate the preloaded USPS address and populate the appropriate address fields on the SBC service order. The order should then be able to flow through SBC's automated ordering procedures, including address validation, prior to initiating the Local Service Request ("LSR").

One problem with SBC's internal databases, that could be alleviated by access to the LIV database, lies in the fact that the addresses contained in that database may not match either the USPS addresses or the address provided by the customer. In those cases, when RCN performs an address validation query, while matches may occur, the query is still rejected by SBC. For example, while the USPS may identify an address as "123 Main Street, Apt. 4R" and the customer advises RCN that its address is "123 Main Street, Apt. 4-R" if SBC's database includes "123 Main Street, Apt. 4-Rear" a CLEC address validation request that included either of the first two versions of the address, while technically a match with the SBC address, would nonetheless be rejected because it did not match the SBC address exactly.

RCN has frequently encountered this type of problem with SBC's LIV database. The problem usually arises when RCN performs an address validation and receives an address reject because the address does not match an address in SBC's database. Prior to issuing the service order, RCN will validate the address via SBC's Graphic User Interface ("GUI"). If the address appears to be incorrect within SBC's GUI interface, *i.e.*, it does not match the USPS address preloaded into RCN's billing system, RCN then validates the address with its customer to ensure that no errors occurred during the order entry process. RCN often determines that, while the address provided by its customer is the correct address, *i.e.*, it matches the USPS address, the address is considered not valid by SBC's internal database because it does not match the address contained in that database. In other words, even if RCN determines from the USPS files and

confirmation with its customer that the address it provided SBC is correct, SBC may not recognize it as such because it is not identical to the address included in SBC's database. Access to SBC's LIV unit database would potentially alleviate these problems because RCN would be able to populate the LSR address fields with the exact same address included in SBC's database.

In order to address increasing order rejects related to address inconsistencies, RCN formally requested SBC to provide the LIV unit address as well as the street address in a CD-ROM format. Currently, the files made available by SBC on CD-ROM include only street ranges and street addresses, which, as noted, do not include sufficient information to properly identify a customer's LIV designation. After several meetings between RCN and SBC, and following RCN's escalation of the issue to senior Ameritech Illinois management, SBC raised the issue at a CLEC User Forum and then promptly denied the request noting that the data could not be made available on CD-ROM due to resource constraints. SBC did not offer any alternative solutions.

The information contained in the LIV database would be useful to RCN and other CLECs in that they would be able to preload addresses that matched exactly the addresses in SBC's database so that at the time RCN submitted an order, RCN could populate the address fields with minimal chance of the address being rejected by SBC's ordering system.¹³ In addition, while it should be reasonable to rely upon the USPS address or the address provided by the customer, RCN's experience has shown that comparing service order information to those addresses may not be sufficient to avoid rejection of the order. Thus, access to the LIV database would provide parity in access to information by enabling RCN to make an apples to apples comparison – its

¹³ See *Qwest Multi-State 271 Order*, at ¶ 40, n.108.

service orders directly to SBC's database -- rather than an applies to oranges comparison -- its services orders to a third-party source that may not be consistent with that database.


By refusing to provide the LIV database on a nondiscriminatory basis to CLECs, SBC has not demonstrated compliance with Checklist Item 2. Without such access, "errors" resulting from inconsistencies between the actual address and the customized address in SBC's database cannot be minimized, causing CLECs to incur additional costs confirming, rechecking and resubmitting address validation requests, leading to customer dissatisfaction and ultimately the inability to migrate the customer to RCN.

III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, RCN respectfully request that the Commission deny SBC's Application for Section 271 authorization in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Alternatively, RCN requests that the Commission condition SBC's Section 271 authorization on SBC making available to CLECs the LIV unit database in a comparable, non-discriminatory manner.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael P. Donahue", is written over a horizontal line.

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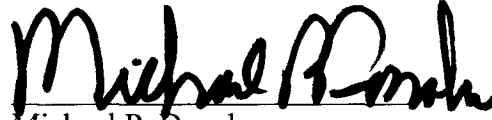
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Dated: August 6, 2003

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Michael P. Donahue, hereby certify that on August 6, 2003, I caused to be served upon the following individuals the Comments of RCN Telecom Services of Illinois, LLC in WC Docket No. 03-167.



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